

Buchbesprechung

LERAUT, P. (2009): Moths of Europe 2. Geometrid Moths. Text and photographs: 805pp, 158 colour plates, 208 text figures, distribution maps. N.A.P. Editions. ISBN 987-2-913688-09-4. Hard Back, Text in English. Order from www.napeditions.com or NAP Éditions, 3 chemin des Hauts Gravies, 91370 Verrières-le-Buisson, France, Tel. (+33)(0)1 60 13 59 52; Fax (+33)(0)1 60 13 01 33, e-mail: napedit@wanadoo.fr. Public price 85,- €.

The last time the geometrid moths of Europe were covered by any sort of comprehensive publication was almost a century ago, when CULOT's classic "Noctuelles et Géomètres d'Europe" was published (1917-1919). Now at last there is another series to replace it. The author and the publisher must both be congratulated for producing this book, dealing with such a difficult and problematic family for which there is a great absence even of regional guides for large areas of Europe. More so because this new work does not shy away from difficult groups and genera (such as *Gnophos* s. str., Bistonini, etc., for which there are no recent taxonomic revisions), introducing a number of new taxonomies.

The book is in pocket format (20 x 13 cm) and can be used both, in the field and in the laboratory. It is structured in the manner of most classical field guides, with sections of Introduction to the group, Collecting methods, Identification and so on, all accompanied by many line drawings. In addition to the colour photographs of the moths there are several high-quality illustrations of ♂ and ♀ genitalia and other important features, such as antennae and details of wing markings, of closely related species.

The greatest value of this book lies in the fact that all European species (with a few exceptions) can be found in this single volume; this alone is a good reason to buy it. Additionally, a numbers of non-European species are also illustrated, for further information.

Naturally, there are a few criticisms. In particular, there are a few errors concerning the Balkan fauna. Some species which are mentioned in the text are not illustrated, for example *Erannis declinans*, *Cnestrognophos pentheri*, *Oulobophora internata*, some *Lithostege* species, *Eupithecia biornata*, *Idaea spissimbaria* and others. Some species are not included in the Index; yet more are only mentioned without any further information. The distribution maps are not always correct, although they sometimes are elaborated upon for some countries in the text. For example the distribution of *Nychiodes dalmatina* is restricted in the western parts of the Balkan Peninsula (a far as the Struma River to East), while *N. waltheri* is restricted to the most eastern parts of Romania, Greece and Bulgaria. *Eumera regina*, *Dasy corsa modesta*, *Aleucis distinctaria* are known also from Albania, *Selenia tetralunaria* is known from Montenegro and *Selidosema plumaria* is well presented in Bulgaria.

In my opinion is would be more useful to be given the various synonyms used in the most common reference books instead of the colloquial English and French names.

In spite of these few criticisms, this book makes an overall important contribution to the knowledge of the European Geometridae. Although the fauna of the European Geometridae is actually quite well-explored, the information is widely scattered in many different and sometimes difficult to obtain books and journals. LERAUT's book draws together much of this information in a single accessible volume, illustrating each species in colour. It is well worth having it and I strongly recommend it to everyone, amateur or professional, interested in moths of Europe. It should also prove useful to a wider natural history audience and to those working in biodiversity conservation and related fields. The price is entirely reasonable for such a comprehensive work obtaining a large number of colour plates.

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